State Bank of India (SBI) has not availed of any refinance assistance from National Housing Bank during the relevant period.

वित्तीय संस्थाओं द्वारा ब्याज-दर में वृद्धि

2694. **श्री रणजीत सिंह:**
डा० जिनेन्द्र कुमार जैन:

क्या **वित्त** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि सभी वित्तीय संस्थाओं ने ब्याज की दर में हाल में वृद्धि की है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो उसके क्या कारण हैं?

वित्त मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री दलबीर सिंह): (क) 16 अगस्त, 1991 से वित्तीय संस्थाओं की सावधि ऋण दरों को उदार बनाते हुए न्यूनतम ऋण दर 15 प्रतिशत वार्षिक कर दिया गया है। 'संस्थाओं द्वारा वित्तपोषित परियोजनाओं के संबंध में परियोजना जोखिम की अनुभूति के आधार पर वे अधिक ब्याज दरें वसूल करने के लिए स्वतंत्र हैं।

(ख) संस्थाओं को अपनी उधार दी हुई राशियों की लागत में पर्याप्त वृद्धि और संसाधन जुटाने के लिए बाजार के स्रोतों पर अधिक निर्भर रहने की अपनी आवश्यकता को ध्यान में रखते हुए ब्याज दरों में वृद्धि करनी पड़ती है।

Agriculture and Rural Debt Scheme

2695. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Karnataka have made any proposals for agriculture and rural debt relief schemes; if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether these schemes were also cleared by NABARD; and

(c) whether Government propose to implement the above Schemes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) to (c) Government of India formulated Agricultural and Rural Debt Relief (ARDR) Scheme, 1990 for providing debt relief to the extent of Rs. 10,000/- per borrower to cover all overdues on short term and term loans advanced by public sector banks and Regional Rural Banks. On the advice of the Central Government, State Governments including that of Karnataka State had also formulated their own schemes on the lines of Government of India's Scheme for cooperative banks. The scheme formulated by the Government of Karnataka for the coopratives and the scheme of the Government of India for public sector banks and Regional Rural Banks have been implemented in Karnataka.

NABARD has reported that as on 7th December, 1991, Cooperatives and Regional Rural Banks have identified 7.26 lakh borrowers in Karnataka State for providing debt relief under ARDR Scheme 1990, involving Rs. 212.38 crores and all these identified borrowers have since been provided with necessary relief and loan waiver certificates. So far as Public Sector Banks are concerned, they have provided debt relief to 8.54 lakh borrowers to the extent of Rs. 277.56 crores.

Financial aid to Karnataka under OECF Japan

2696. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Karnataka Goverment has requested for financial aid package for their projects under OECF Japan; and

(b) if so, whether in view of the importance of the project an early decision will be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The decision of the Government of Japan will be announced at the Aid-India Consortium meeting to be held in June, 1992.

Liberalisation of Gold Import Policy

2697. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to liberalisation Gold Import Policy as recommended by Natarajan Committee Report;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof, and

(c) if the answer to part (a) above be in negative what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) to (c) The Hon. Member is presumably referring to the Report of Rangarajan Committee on Gold Policy. The only recommendation of the Rangarajan Committee in respect of liberalisation of gold import was that the existing ceilings on the aggregate value of gold jewellery that could be imported under the Transfer of Residence Rules and Customs Baggage Rules by passengers who have resided abroad for more than one year should be enhanced and fixed in terms of quantity. The quantity recommended was 100 grams per person, both for female and male passengers. Government have not found it feasible to raise the limit and fix it in terms of weight because of problems of assessment in cases of studded jewellery. However, monetary limits for jewellery allowed to be imported by incoming passengers under the Baggage Rules, 1978 and Transfer of Residence Rules, 1978 have been raised recently from Rs. 1,500/- to Rs. 10,000/- for male passengers and from Rs. 3,000/- to Rs. 20,000/- for female passengers, on the basis of the comparative prices of gold prevailing in 1978 and current prices of gold.

Honouring Top Tax Payers in the country

2698. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to honour and recognise top ranking tax payers in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) if the answer to part (a) above be in negative the manner in which Government plan to recognise such individuals to encourage more persons to pay more taxes; and

(d) whether it is a fact that some organisations had arranged for such honour in Bombay recently but the Income Tax Department gave very passive response inspite of ministers' support?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

(c) The Government does not consider it expedient to honour and recognise such individuals who pay large amount of taxes.

(d) A function for this purpose was recently organised in Bombay by a non-official organisation but the Goverment was not officially associated with it.

Instructions on Issuing of Demand Drafts

2699. SHRI SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some instructions have been issued to banks to issue Demand Drafts only to those people who have Saving Bank Accounts with the branch where request for such drafts is made;

(b) if so, the details thereof with names of banks covered under such instructions;

(c) whether such instructions also put some limitation on amount of demand drafts;

(d) if so, the details thereof with background for such step;

(e) whether such instructions have been well publicised for knowledge of general public through media; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) to (d) Reserve Bank of India have advised all public sector banks to ensure that bank drafts are issued